

percent of calls involve threats of homicide as well as suicide. Homicidal behavior resembles suicidal behavior in three aspects: crisis, ambivalence and an appeal or demand for change enforced by a threat of violence. The danger of homicide is highest when the individual is angry, abusing alcohol, has a weapon and feels hopeless about life.

Often, physicians can help restore communication in a family, and provide a forum for an inarticulate frustrated spouse. Potential victims of homicide may be encouraged to get guns and other weapons out of the house, seek help or sometimes leave the scene. When children are at risk, the physician has a moral and legal responsibility. Often, patients on the verge of committing homicide are suffering from a severe, unadmitted, depressive reaction which is amenable to treatment.

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Parents of Battered Children

PRESENT-DAY CLINICAL AND RESEARCH FINDINGS view the genesis of child maltreatment as rooted in the impoverishment or absence of adequate "mothering" during the formative months and years of the abusing parent's life. This impoverishment in turn leads to failure in the development

of trust, which then results in interpersonal isolation, and withdrawal from later adult relationships of intimacy and sharing. Recognizing the impact of this deficiency of parenting in abusing and maltreating mothers and fathers, multi-disciplinary teams responded with multi-dimensional techniques for intervention and prevention.

Today traditional programs of individual and group psychotherapy are augmented by enrollment of parents and children in therapeutic day-care centers, and by use of specially selected and trained volunteers, who, available the clock around to specified families, become parent surrogates for the troubled and overwhelmed parents of abused children. In addition, self-help groups such as Parents Anonymous, and regularly scheduled, but informal, classes on parenting and child care, concurrent with other therapeutic and community-based outreach programs are proving most helpful. These approaches are the foundation for multi-dimensional programs whose goals are intervention, education, and prevention of child abuse. Such multi-therapeutic approaches can today contribute significantly to the successful rehabilitation of 90 percent of those mothers and fathers identified as having a child "at risk."

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